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ON THE COVER: Amtrak's new color scheme--red, white and blue stripes encircling the engine--brings a new sparkle to its SDP40F units. It's seen here on engine 507 on the SOUTHWEST LIMITED at Galesburg IL in July. Behind 507 are 3 more SDPs with the old red nose paint. Kodachrome photo by Harry M. Grossman.

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SEPTEMBER 1976
#138

ON THE COVER: See rear cover for caption. Kodachrome by Harry M. Grossman.

LETTERS

A suggestion in your last issue is an intriguing one: that Gerald Ford improve the likelihood of his own election by ejecting William T. Coleman.

At this late date in Mr. Coleman's tenure, my reaction to such a maneuver would be acute cynicism. Ford's supplanting of Brinegar by Coleman brought short-lived acclaim from people like myself, who have called upon USDOT to fulfill its ostensible role by judicious and impartial treatment of the modes over which it has authority.

Subsequent events suggest that Coleman was urged upon Ford by the same self-serving partisans of off-track transport who had saddled us with Brinegar; and who had espoused John Volpe until he manifested an inclination to recognize the merits of railway technology.

Conceivably Ford could choose as USDOT Secretary a man who is known to favor utilizing the potentialities of railway technology as much as off-track transport. Conceivably that man would be able to implement substantive remedial action between now and election day. Unless both these events happened, Coleman's expulsion would appear a transparent last-minute attempt to curry election-day favor among the advocates of resource-conserving, ecologically desirable transport practices. The person in the chief executive's office has had ample opportunity ere now to observe and to arrest the current secretary's tactics for stifling railway transportation--not merely passenger travel, but freight handling as well.

A friend in the East reports that Coleman was formerly attorney for National City Lines. I shall appreciate a confirmation of whether that assertion is true.

Kenneth McFarling
Portland, Oregon

(Ed. note: National City Lines was the General Motors-related corporation that took control of many local U.S. transit systems and converted them from rail to bus lines.)

I read with much interest Peter Bretz's "Railpass Ramblings" (second June RTN), followed by reader Michael Leighton's comments thereon in the first July issue. There's one observation in Mr. Leighton's letter that disturbs me greatly: "Whether we like it or not, this isn't the turn of the century and 'obedient servants' are no more."

...Ordinary courtesy and politeness doesn't cost a dime. I recall a trip overnight in a day coach from New York to Cincinnati in the late '40's. The roadbed west of Harrisburg (or that car) was so bad that reading was impossible, and for that matter, so was sleeping in much more than a fitful doze. I asked a conductor "Is the ride this way all the way to Cincinnati?" and with a smile a mile wide he answered, "No, west of Altoona it's a lot worse!" Every passenger within earshot burst out laughing and good spirits were restored.

I realize the equipment's older and the roadbeds are poorly maintained, and I guess the rides will never again be as fast and comfortable as they were in the late '30's. That I can accept. But if on top of that the best Amtrak can add is the sullen, surly, disagreeable employee who can ruin a trip because, after all, "obedient servants are no more," forget it! The seats may be crowded and the food plastic, but there are plenty of young, smiling obedient servants on American and T.W.A. who don't realize they're obsolete...

John V. Fels
Phoenix, Arizona

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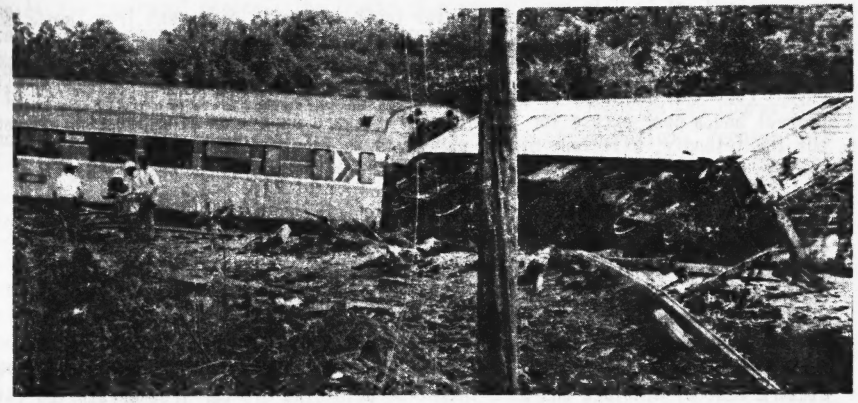

ANOTHER DERAILMENT OF THE PANAMA LIMITED

The southbound Amtrak PANAMA LIMITED, train 59, derailed again near Vaiden, MS, about 27 miles north of the spot where it left the tracks on Jun 30 (see RTN, July & 1st Aug issues), at 7:52am on Sept 9. No cause was given for the accident, in which approximately 30 people were injured, at least two seriously. Among those hospitalized were 4 passengers, an ICG trainman, and an Amtrak dining car employee. The train was traveling at 79mph approximately 200 yards south of milepost 653 on ICG rails when the second engine and the 11 cars left the tracks. It was an expensive derailment, with an estimated $684,000 damage, most of it to Amtrak equipment. Following is the consist of the derailed train, with damage estimates in parentheses: P30 engine 706, not derailed; P30 engine 703 ($14,000); heater car 1918 ($50,000); baggage 1168 ($40,000); diner 8048 evidently deadheading ($52,000); sleeper 2230 "Avon Park" ($90,000); sleeper 2232 "Ocala" ($90,000); diner 8202 "Allegheny Club" (only car to overturn--see photo above by Jimmy Carman, courtesy of Jackson Daily News--$85,000); coach 6055 ($57,000); coach 6045 ($30,000); coach 6004 ($45,000); coach 6062 ($50,000); tavern-lounge-observation 3343 ($30,000). The accident tore up about 1/3-mile of track. Damage to track was estimated at $50,000, and $1000 damage to signal equipment. The wreck was not widely publicized, partly because it was overshadowed by the news of the collision of two airliners over Jugoslavia which killed a record 176 persons, about 24 hours later.

DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN TRAIN DELIGHTS POLITICIANS

Robert Strauss, head of the Democratic National Committee, told Amtrak people that the campaign train he had ordered had "accomplished 100% of what he hoped". He was referring to the Committee's whistlestop train from New York to Chicago which ran Sept 20-21 with an overnight stop in Pittsburgh, over the route of the BROADWAY LIMITED. Democratic Presidential candidate Jimmy Carter rode the train for the first day, with his Vice-Presidential running mate Walter Mondale taking over for the second day's journey. The train, coordinated by Amtrak's Detroit District Supervisor Richard Tower, ran smoothly, with a final on-time arrival in Chicago. Mr. Tower, who as a Berkeley university student at one time served as Research Editor of RTN, also had coordinated the Ford campaign train in Michigan be-

(continued on p. 7)

THE READERS COMMENT

MORE READER COMMENTS FROM OUR THIRD TRAIN RATING SURVEY

CN SUPER CONTINENTAL

"The 'other' Canadian transcontinental train is vastly different from the CP's version. While it lacks many of the CANADIAN's good points, it has many of its own. It was on this train that I ran into some of the worst crew. Contrary to recent reports, the 'best' crew was the 'West' crew. A snarling trainman out of Capreol and a poor excuse for a dining car steward east from Winnipeg (who chewed out the friendly, efficient dining car staff in front of the passengers) left a lasting impression, in contrast to the excellent CP crew I had enjoyed earlier. With more promotion and fairly recently refurbished cars, the train was more than double the length of its CP counterpart, with the sleepers filled to capacity and coaches and Dayniters about 75% filled. The dome was missing, but printed cards in the substituted lounge stated that the CN regretted it's absence. With more domes and a de-padding of the schedule, could move from good to excellent in my rating" (William D. Sample, E. Hartford, CT).

"CNR slack shows again (literally--switching at Capreol is a crash-bam affair at midnight-1:00am, taking one hour to do what Pennsy does in 15min at Harrisburg). Steward east of Winnipeg was more intent on defending his car from unreserved eaters than in feeding them--and he gave out reservations only at breakfast! Porter in 'Englee' east of Winnipeg did not make beds first day. Slow train. Sl-o-o-ow train. And late, too" (Philip J. Mulligan, Philadelphia,PA).

"CN has really improved this train since my last trip. Services are excellent, including complimentary hors d'oeuvres in the lounge car each afternoon and bingo each evening in the dining car... My only disappointment was the missing super dome on our westbound trip" (Stephen E. Morse, Marshall, MN).

"I boarded a full length lounge car, briefly, at Jasper. It apparently had just been refurbished, and was PLUSH! A notice to passengers referred to CN's 'total commitment' to good passenger service" (John Kramer, W. Henrietta, NY).

LONE STAR

"Train is better than it's cracked up to be; old Santa Fe still shows. Porter was the best ever encountered. Dinners excellent, lunch just so-so (but this is true for Amtrak generally). Leaves Chicago at a very good time" (Reader, Austin TX).

"Train is deteriorating rapidly, especially in the dining car. The Santa Fe people have almost all retired. On my most recent trip, dining car service was a disgrace: orders mixed up, out of food (altho less than 100 passengers on board), food served cold, and car closed at 8:30am. It is no wonder that business has reached an all-time low and that the new Dallas service has failed to attract any customers" (Duane W. Roller, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada).

"No one seems to know that you can go Chicago-Dallas direct" (William Stroh III, Short Hills, NJ).

"Quality of equipment and service seems to have deteriorated in the last year. Air conditioning throughout train was unreliable. Sleeper 2707 was without air and electricity from Ft. Worth to Chicago. Dining car understaffed, waiters very sloppy in appearance and manner. Lounge car, while nicely refurbished, was not kept clean. Toilets were filthy, tables littered and unwashed. Service of sleeping car attendant K. Cowie was SUPERB, despite lack of electricity and air. His primary concern was the comfort of his passengers, and he missed no opportunity to be of service. He did not shine shoes, but that is difficult to do in the dark. Meals were never announced" (James W. Hofmeister, Houston, TX).

"Lounge attendant knew his business and advised lounge patrons to stock up on beer before the train entered 'dry' areas. Altho cordial, the dining car crew was a bit sloppy. They gave me a dirty water glass at dinner, and the service was slow" (C. A. Rudisel, White Bear Lake, MN).

COAST STARLIGHT

"Tremendous train for the sightseer. The Cascade Mountain climb is as breathtaking as thru the Rockies. Besides the mountains, one gets to see all those lumber mills in operation--countless numbers of them. Then, south of San Luis Obispo, the 'tease railroad' begins. The tracks give you a tease view of the Pacific Ocean. First the sand dunes, then a few seconds' glimpse of the water, then more mountains, sand dunes again, another glimpse of the Pacific, sand dunes, and finally a broad, long-lasting view of the beautiful Pacific"(Frederic Hirsch, N.Y.C.).

"The STARLIGHT usually impresses me as 'breathless' or 'frenzied' in character, and this is especially evident in the dining-snack-lounge operation. Perhaps this STARLIGHT personality characteristic is magnified in my mind because I so frequently ride it in connection with the SOUTHWEST LIMITED, which is relatively calm and gracious. The STARLIGHT lounge still functions primarily as a dining-car holding-pen, and this is most conspicuous northbound out of L.A. when the early luncheon patrons begin to gether and grumble before the late breakfast patrons are out. The food is adequate, the price is right, and the service marginal. It is somewhat difficult for me to understand the length of the set-up delay between departing and arriving patrons inasmuch as the table appointments are minimal. It cannot be too time-consuming to whip off paper place mats and napkins and give the table a wipe with a damp cloth... On several occasions, having despaired of seating in the diner and having consumed my quota of Martinis, I have ventured up to the snack car. The atmosphere there is even more frenzied, the service is arrogantly rude, and the car is messy... When I board at Salinas, southbound, the train has survived a long run, so cleanliness is about average. I was especially alert to this because of a Salinas businessman acquaintance who decided recently to try the train to Santa Barbara ('NEVER again!') and found restrooms 'disgustingly filthy', toilets not functioning, and an attendant who answered an inquiry about the arrival time with a curt 'look at the schedule.' Very frustrating indeed for those of us trying to promote Amtrak" (E. Harry Beltzig, Salinas, CA).

"One of the best Amtrak operations I've experienced; maybe the best. The coach attendants are without a doubt the best I've encountered on the system... The domes returning to the train will be big assets" (Jeff Pletcher, Lafayette, LA).

"Best train I rode on this 2-week trip. (Does Biaginni know his trains are this good?) Great all the way around" (R. G. Raymond, Akron, OH).

"BN's track was rougher, but SP's speed limit is frustrating, and this train could sure use a dome car (Ed. note: domes appeared this summer). It was CROWDED all the way. About half the passengers got off at Oakland, and another half got on to replace them, and it was like that everywhere. Lounge car ran out of almost everything by San Jose and the attendant was forever disappearing for an hour at a time, even before they ran out. The lounge and diner close at Oxnard, without warning, which I believe is in violation of Amtrak's rule book" (S. M. Miller, Carlsbad CA).

"Conductors courteous and informative. Lounge cars were sometimes filthy. On-board crew needs to do better job of en route litter patrol... This is a better than average train, but it still hasn't achieved its full potential in terms of equipment and on-board services" (Arthur P. Poole, Coquille, OR).

"One of the best Amtrak trains, but it still lacks enough of the aura of quality and attention to detail and the necessary extra service features it needs to attain a maximum overall rating" (Robert W. Glover, San Francisco, CA).

EMPIRE BUILDER

"Ten cars, including four domes! On time all the way. Scenic route" (Chris D. Cameron, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, HI).

"Train had three domes, all with glass. Too many seats were sold east of Minneapolis, forcing seats in dome to be used as regular seats, after a 56-seat coach was removed at Minneapolis. Food from diner good, but service was slow. Brakeman

America's most highly-rated dining car: the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR's diner "Silver Banquet," as a crowd of satisfied passengers enjoy breakfast on a June day. Photo from Kodachrome by Peter Bretz.

in dome pointed out various sights, especially the flood waters near Minot. Train was delayed 30min at Havre for an ambulance to come to look at possible cardiac case. Had to detour on Milwaukee tracks out of Yakima due to BN freight derailment. BN employees seem to take pride in running their trains on time. Milwaukee roadbed Chicago-Minneapolis very rough" (Jeff Cole, Carpinteria, CA).

"Equipment excellent as far as interior refurbishing goes... However, some mechanical problems were encountered, such as an overheated coach. Also, the front dome windows were as dirty as ever. Dining car crew generally cheery and helpful, but coach attendants gave their usual lackluster performance" (Jeff Pletcher, Lafayette, LA). "Food crew from Seattle-Minneapolis was good. The food crew that got on at Minneapolis was the worst I've ever seen. Very rude and mouthy" (Douglas O. Scott, Elkhart, IN).

"Great dome lounge was used--nicely refurbished. Could be kept neater, but attendant was nice. Courteous, efficient diner crew for a change" (Thomas A. Beaumont, Minneapolis, MN).

NIGHT OWL

"The NIGHT OWL can be relied upon to arrive on time. On one trip the sleeping car porter showed me his equipment defect list--3 pages' worth on the sleeper (I added a few items" (Barry M. Steinberg, Quincy, MA).

"The first class passenger has decent cars and service, but the mass of coach passengers had a mixture of refurbished and non-refurbished equipment. An earlier departure from Philadelphia would be nice for the big group which boards the train there as well as for passengers from farthersouth" (James Pakala, Hatfield, PA).

FLORIDIAN

"Peter Bretz is right; the FLORIDIAN is a clunky little train! Willie Coleman couldn't have sabotaged its routing and schedule more than Amtrak has! What made it bearable on our trip was the ex-SCL coach-obs serving as lounge: refurbished, well-stocked with potables, and a most genial attendant. The dining car, ex-FEC, was also refurbished, and came up with some excellent meals. Crew of 3 serving persons (one male, two female) did their jobs efficiently and in good humor. Only sour note was when the tired steward tried to rush our evening meal... A/C worked beautifully, but plastic mattresses were uncomfortable" (Robt. Holmes, Mt. Union, PA).

"I was shaken awake at midnight by an L&N conductor at Lafayette, IN. My seat in the dome coach would not properly recline, so I took my pillow and went forward to the next car, which was nearly empty. He demanded to know if I was in the right seat" (Robert Underwood, W. Springfield, MA).

CAMPAIGN TRAIN (continued from page 3)

fore the recent primary elections. The 13-car Amfleet train was made up as follows: P30 engines 718 & 724; baggage 1365; Amcoach 21823, Amcafe 20001, Amcoach 21822, Amdinette 20213, Amcoach 21821, Amdinette 20215, Amcafe 20018, Amcoach 21063, Amcoach 21824, Amclub 20128, Amdinette 20214, Auto-Liner open-platform car 101. From NY-Harrisburg two E60 electric engines propelled the train. From Harrisburg-Chicago it was preceded by a pilot train consisting of SDP40F engine 593, P30 engine 713, coach 6014, and baggage-heater car 1292. Drumheads at each end of the campaign train pictured a steam train and read "Democratic Whistlestop Special--A Train for a Change". Flags flew on the front locomotive. Helicopters followed the train over much of its route. The Amfleet cars, destined for use on the SAN JOAQUIN, were fitted with elaborate communication equipment and some of them modified for the occasion. As of Sept 23 they remain in Chicago while the Demo. Committee decides if they wish to use them again, before the equipment is removed. Car 20214 was partly modified into a "living room interior" for candidates and Secret Service personnel. Two cars were fitted with telephone lines that could be plugged into outside connections at each stop. Auto-Liner 101, leased by Amtrak for this trip, is former sleeper "Loblolly Pine", built by Pullman-Standard in 1953 for the L&N, and used on the HUMMINGBIRD, PAN AMERICAN, and GEORGIAN of that railroad. Auto-Liner Corp. rebuilt the car in 1974 into a 3-bedroom configuration plus living and dining rooms, crew quarters, and kitchen. Bedrooms have TV, telephone and showers. Altho the car is steam-heated, it has a kind of dual air-conditioning system. It was made compatible with Amfleet cars by removal of the diaphragm.

The train left NY at 7:30am Sept 20, stopping at Newark to add Propane tanks, which are forbidden in NY tunnels. Gov. Carey, Mayor Beame, Daniel Moynihan and other political figures saw the train off. Stops were made at Trenton, Overbrook (close to Philadelphia), and Harrisburg. At Harrisburg, Carter left the train to visit the state capitol, while P30 engines were put on. At this point a little rain began, and the train moved on to Altoona, Johnstown (at dusk), and Pittsburgh, where a huge crowd assembled. At this city Senator Mondale met the train and Carter left. Both candidates wore a conductor's cap throughout the trip. At 7am the 21st, the train left Pittsburgh and moved to Massilon, OH, where ConRail had neatly repaired an area of unsightly ditches and weeds. Next stop was Mansfield OH where there is no station, so a downtown street served as the stop. At Crestline OH the train was to be fueled only, but a crowd appeared, and speeches resulted. It was at Crestline that former President Harry Truman at noon on June 4, 1948 began his famous whistlestop tours. At Lima there was a big crowd, and Fort Wayne and Plymouth IN were stops. By Gary, IN, darkness had fallen and the weather turned cold. Mayor Daley met the train at 8:50pm in Chicago. Among the press notables aboard were James Reston, Tom Wicker and Teddy White, altho fewer reporters rode on the second day of the trip. The Demos raised money by selling 50¢ plastic peanut-shaped whistles. Paul Reistrup, just returned from Japan, boarded the train at Trenton and rode to Overbrook. Amtrak's head of operations, Dave Watts, was aboard for the whole trip, as were Jim Bryant and Ed Edel of Public Affairs.

TURBOLINERS BEGIN REGULAR EMPIRE SERVICE OPERATION

Three U.S.-built, French-designed Turboliners, phased into service on the Empire Service route out of New York in August (see last issue), now begin regular operation as of Sept 20. A fourth trainset will be added to the runs in early October; that set begins a delivery run/display tour Sept 23 between Chicago and Washington. The train will run on L&N tracks to Greencastle, and on ConRail to Washington, arriving Sept 25. It leaves Chicago 3am the 23rd, reaching Indianapolis at 11am and continuing on to Columbus, where it will be on display all day the 24th. At 4:30am

the 25th it leaves Columbus, moving to Pittsburgh for a 1½-hour stop, then Harrisburg, and a 7pm arrival in D.C. This is apparently the set of equipment seen by reader John Baxter leaving San Diego Sept 14 following the 1pm departure of train 773. The consist was: power coach 151, food service coach 180, coach 181, coach 179, power coach 162. By the end of 1976, Amtrak said, all 7 Turbo sets are to be in operation in New York State. On the present Empire Service schedule, Turbos leave NY (Grand Central Terminal) daily exc Fri at 8:15pm, reaching Albany 11:05pm; daily exc Sat lv NY 2pm, ar Albany 4:50pm; Fri & Sat lv NY at noon, ar Buffalo 8:25pm. Eastbound, daily lv Albany 7am, ar NY 9:50am; Mon-Fri lv Albany 8:15am, ar NY 11:05am; Sat & Sun lv Buffalo 8:30am, ar NY 4:55pm. Amtrak is not running the Turboliners into Grand Central in peak periods until further third-rail modifications are completed on the trains.

CINCINNATI TRAIN SET FOR OCTOBER 31 STARTUP

Latest unofficial word is that Amtrak has rejected the name METROPOLITAN in favor of SHENANDOAH for the new Washington DC-Cincinnati train, due to makes its inaugural run Oct 31. Ohio ARP reports that the train will be numbered 33 westbound and 32 eastbound, along with the following information: intermediate stops will be Silver Spring, Rockville, Brunswick, Harpers Ferry, Martinsburg, Cumberland, Keyser, Oakland, Rowlesburg, Grafton, Clarksburg, Parkersburg, Athens, and Chillicothe. Train will leave Washington at 9:25am, Harpers Ferry 10:30am, Cumberland 12:28pm, Grafton 3:55pm, Parkersburg 7:15pm, Athens 8:10pm, Chillicothe 9:30pm, and arrive Cincinnati at 11:59pm. Eastbound it leaves Cincy at 6:45am, Chillicothe 9:15am, Athens 10:35am, Parkersburg 11:30am, Grafton 2:45pm, Cumberland 6:15pm, Harpers Ferry 8:20pm, and arrives Washington at 9:40pm. Amfleet equipment is to be used. OARP said that a backup move at Cincinnati, such as the RILEY/MOUNTAINEER makes, will be necessitated by lack of Southwest Approach tracks there.

GROUNDBREAKING for Amtrak's Cleveland Lakefront station took place Aug 31. In our 2nd August issue we published a comment from a reader in opposition to efforts to retain Cleveland Union Terminal, and we have received several lengthy rebuttals which we planned to publish in this issue. However, the press of late-breaking news requires that we delay publication until next issue.

THE CORRIDOR BREAKS DOWN FOR TWO DAYS

Traffic on the Northeast Corridor was disrupted for an entire weekend--9:45am Saturday Sept 18 to 6am Monday Sept 20--due to a ConRail freight derailment in the Wilson Street Tunnel in Baltimore, involving 17 cars. About 52 corridor trains had to be terminated or truncated north of the wreck scene, while long distance trains detoured over Chessie System between Bay View Yards north of Baltimore and Washington, with 8100-series PC locomotives seen towing GG-1 equipped Amtrak trains (with pantographs down) along the "Royal Blue Line". Cleanup of the wreck was made more difficult by closed, smoky conditions in the tunnel, the weight of the clay-loaded freight cars, and the breakdown of one derrick. 1500 feet of track were ripped up in the derailment, which was apparently caused by a rail giving away. Amtrak passengers were bused between railheads.

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CALTRAK SAN DIEGAN: RIDING THE INAUGURAL TRAIN

by Peter Putnam Bretz

September 1, 1976, 2:00pm. The scene is Los Angeles Union Station. Vast emptyness in the waiting room, a cool relief from the blazing afternoon. A few redcaps lounge around. The ticket clerks sit idle. The snack bar and railroad gift shop are open, but business is slow. I'm cheered by the appearance (off and on in the last few years) of the original Art Moderne train board, its brass decorations right in tradition.

Down at the train gates, a newly painted sign proclaims the existence of the CALTRAK SAN DIEGAN on track 7. The gate, however, is closed. Outside in the sunny and tree-shaded patio one or two railfans sit waiting.

At 2:30, things start humming when a bus pulls up and unloads the Burbank Police Youth Band, all decked out in their police-blue uniforms. For a while we hear brass instruments tuning up, and sounds of a general assemblage. More people are floating around now, and some drift out into the sunlight. More cameras are in evidence, and a local TV crew arrives. Two or three groups of Amtrak officials hold little discussions.

Suddenly the band marches into the patio with military precision and proceeds to play rousing march tunes. It's a 20-piece band with 14 additional girls as banner bearers and color guard, plus a majorette in red, white & blue. The leader wears bright yellow and blue. The band has a nice up-beat tempo.

Not many are around to hear the band yet, however, and after about a half-hour they depart for the platforms. Meantime, here's a tall, distinguished gentleman wearing an old-style straw hat skimmer. He's surrounded by Amtrak people and is shaking hands with them. He's California State Senator James R. Mills (Dem. San Diego), President Pro-Tem of the senate, one of the big pushers for this train service. He brings his family along for the ride.

Now it's time to go over and sign in. I get a train ticket stamped "Public Affairs Group" plus a name tag. Then, it is up to track 7.

An eight-car train awaits with F40 units 224 and 222 up front, with an all-Amfleet consist: 21139, 20027 (Amcafe), 21148, 21136, 21145, 21138, and 20025 (Amcafe). The last three cars are reserved for newsmen. The Youth Band is stationed across two sets of tracks on another platform. I spot a big banner on the next-to-last car, reading "Caltrak San Diegan", with a color blow-up of a Turboliner on either side of the lettering. A small rostrum is set up before it, and newsmen are crawling around all over the place.

As everybody gets set up, here comes the 3:35 train from San Diego with engine 229 and four cars. Plenty of people detrain. Presently a young woman comes to the microphone and introduces herself as Adriana Gianturco, Director of the California DOT (CalTrans), co-sponsor of this 403-B train. "The CALTRAK train is a small but significant first step... Today, CalTrans and Amtrak are saying we can encourage this at the state level... it's part of a search for balanced transportation... We'll try to provide more service elsewhere in the state..."

Senator Mills is introduced. "We have the busiest corridor in the Western U.S. between Los Angeles and San Diego..." He says that providing more transportation in other modes would be very expensive. "Our answer (for transportation) in the last few years (in this country) has not been the correct or most economical one..."

The next speaker is DonBurns, Secretary of Business and Transportation for CalTrans. He represents Gov. Brown and expresses similar sentiments. About 75 people listen and take pictures. Among those present are Amtrak VP Dave Watts, representing Paul Reistrup; Neal Owen, Western Regional VP; Arthur Lloyd, Public Affairs Western Region;

Frank Mertz of the Santa Fe; a city councilman from Del Mar; and the district director of CalTrans.

Dave Watts speaks and expresses Amtrak's pleasure at this new startup service, saying there has been a long and cordial relationship with the State of California and Senator Mills. "...Amtrak will do everything in its power to ensure the success of this joint venture..."

Adriana Gianturco is now called upon to break a bottle of California champagne against the side of the Amcoach. The second try does it. "Yaaay" shouts the crowd. As everyone gets onboard, I overhear a reporter ask his colleague "I hope the air conditioning is working right." Maybe he's been on other inaugural runs.

But of course the A/C works beautifully. In fact, I think the Amfleet system is very efficient, whisking smoke away quickly. Settling down in a comfortable Amcafe seat, I enjoy a glass of champagne, along with a handful of mixed nuts I've procured, and an hors d'oeuvre or two. We leave right on time at 4:10pm. Unlike the usual practice, we move forward out of the station and head south. A number of regular passengers are also on board for this first run. TV people conduct interviews as we roll along, with bright lights on and off.

Fullerton is reached one minute early. The Sunny Hills Band greets us, along with a good crowd of people. We leave at 4:48pm. More Almaden champagne is passed around, with waiters coming to our seat to fill our glass from time to time.

We arrive at Santa Ana at 5:06 and leave at 5:09, 8 minutes late. Some dignitaries are on the platform along with about 2 dozen regular passengers, but no band. As the train streaks along near Irvine at about 80 mph, small Amtrak travel bags are passed out, containing little goodies--a name tag, schedules, a ball-point pen, and "See the country--travel Amtrak" button, etc. A representative from Mexicoach is on board. That's the connecting bus service from the San Diego station to Tijuana and other points, offering free bus tickets--good any time--to those who want them.

At San Juan Capistrano the station restaurant is built out of an old Santa Fe heavyweight passenger coach. We're in at 5:26 and out at 5:30. A country Western group

serenades the train. A CalTrans official almost gets left behind, and has to clamber up the high door sill. The door stays open for a couple of minutes as we pick up speed. Dutch doors would be better.

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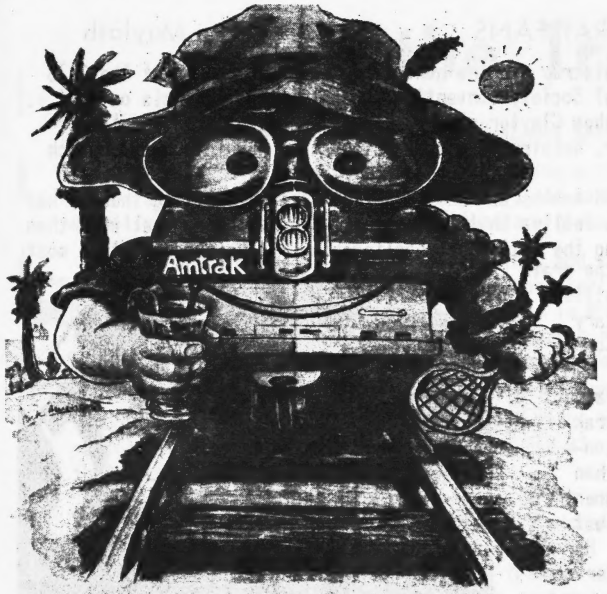
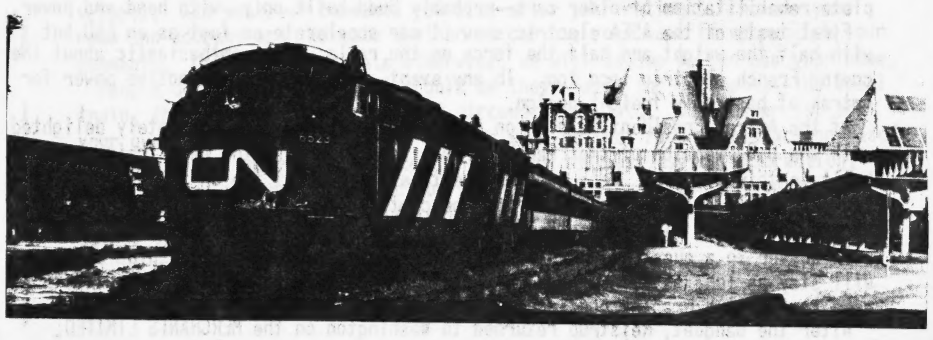
(continued on page 15)

A GALLERY OF TRAINS



(Left:) Amtrak uses this art work in Chicago-area newspaper ads to promote its $54.40 one-way coach fare to Florida on the FLORIDIAN. Ad is headed: "Florida without getting burned. $54.40 one-way coach." (Below:) At the CALTRAK SAN DIEGAN inaugural, State Senator James Mills and family prepare to board the train. Note portion of CALTRAK SAN DIEGAN banner with drawing of Turboliner, on Amfleet car exterior. Photo by Peter Putnam Bretz.

(Bottom:) One of the last trains to use Palais Station in Quebec City poses outside the green-roofed castle-like structure on Aug 29. Trains stopped using the station Aug 31. Photo from Kodachrome by Guy Chartrand. (CN Train 25.)



Frank Mertz of the Santa Fe; a city councilman from Del Mar; and the district director of CalTrans.

Dave Watts speaks and expresses Amtrak's pleasure at this new startup service, saying there has been a long and cordial relationship with the State of California and Senator Mills. "...Amtrak will do everything in its power to ensure the success of this joint venture..."

Adriana Gianturco is now called upon to break a bottle of California champagne against the side of the Amcoach. The second try does it. "Yaaay" shouts the crowd. As everyone gets onboard, I overhear a reporter ask his colleague "I hope the air conditioning is working right." Maybe he's been on other inaugural runs.

But of course the A/C works beautifully. In fact, I think the Amfleet system is very efficient, whisking smoke away quickly. Settling down in a comfortable Amcafe seat, I enjoy a glass of champagne, along with a handful of mixed nuts I've procured, and an hors d'oeuvre or two. We leave right on time at 4:10pm. Unlike the usual practice, we move forward out of the station and head south. A number of regular passengers are also on board for this first run. TV people conduct interviews as we roll along, with bright lights on and off.

Fullerton is reached one minute early. The Sunny Hills Band greets us, along with a good crowd of people. We leave at 4:48pm. More Almaden champagne is passed around, with waiters coming to our seat to fill our glass from time to time.

We arrive at Santa Ana at 5:06 and leave at 5:09, 8 minutes late. Some dignitaries are on the platform along with about 2 dozen regular passengers, but no band. As the train streaks along near Irvine at about 80 mph, small Amtrak travel bags are passed out, containing little goodies--a name tag, schedules, a ball-point pen, and "See the country--travel Amtrak" button, etc. A representative from Mexicoach is on board. That's the connecting bus service from the San Diego station to Tijuana and other points, offering free bus tickets--good any time--to those who want them.

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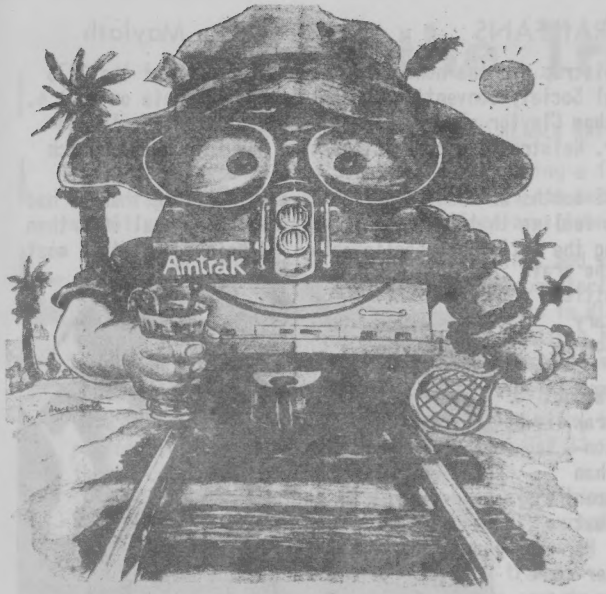

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REISTRUP TALKS TO RAILFANS

by Ken Maylath

Amtrak President Paul Reistrup did the honors as featured speaker at the 1976 National Railway Historical Society convention banquet in Philadelphia on Sept 4. (Southern Railway head Graham Claytor played a similar role at last year's convention in Knoxville.) Mr. Reistrup had some interesting new information which is summarized here.

Reistrup described his 18 months as head of Amtrak as more exciting than he had expected. He repeated his feeling that Congress is much easier to deal with than the bureaucracy--describing the latter as unbelievable. He pointed out that most of a work season is down the drain because of the recently settled hassle with DOT and Secretary Coleman on the Northeast Corridor takeover.

Amtrak photo

Reistrup feels that the amount of federal subsidy for Amtrak should be kept within reason--probably going no higher than the nearly half-billion amount for the coming year--at least in terms of 1976 dollars. He feels the situation is under control now--with July revenue up $12.6 million from last year, for example. And he wants excellent service for the money invested.

The Amtrak President let it be known that he's heading for Japan later this month for a first-hand look at high speed operations there--especially maintenance requirements--given the future 120mph operations coming in the NE Corridor. Referring to possible future corridor operations, he was especially enthusiastic about the possibilities of L.A.-San Diego. If grade crossing problems could be eased, and 30min cut from schedules, Amtrak could capture two-thirds of the public transportation market there, he feels.

There was a long discussion of equipment. He confirmed that the EMPIRE BUILDER and NORTH COAST will get bilevel cars first, tho he personally would like to give the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR higher priority. The northern trains get the edge because of a desire to eliminate steam heat with its winter freeze-up problems there. The present hi-levels will go to the LONE STAR and INTER-AMERICAN. In the winter, at least, they should show up on the PANAMA and FLORIDIAN. He addressed the gap in present equipment purchases: Amfleet takes care of the shorter runs. Bilevel answers the needs of long Western runs. But what about such trains as the BROADWAY and LAKE SHORE? There's no final decision--but a recommendation to Congress is promised in the near future. Possibilities include single-level sleepers or complete rehabilitation of older cars--probably Budd-built only--with head end power.

First tests of the ASEA electric show it can accelerate as fast as an E60 but with half the weight and half the force on the rails. He's enthusiastic about the coming French electric loco too. In any event, he says, no more motive power for Amtrak of basically freight design.

If the Amtrak President is high on imported electrics, he's completely delighted with the U.S. version of the French turbos. He calls them the best trains ever built in this country. He's much less enthusiastic about the UA trains, criticizing the single axle design and saying the continue to cause problems in spite of more maintenance. It seems clear that their days on Amtrak are numbered.

In answer to a question, Reistrup said flatly that Lexan--or something similar--will stay as long as he's around. It's stopped 22 bullets so far. But efforts to ease the scratch problem continue.

After the banquet, Reistrup returned to Washington on the MERCHANTS LIMITED.

Rate the Trains

ANNOUNCING RTN'S FOURTH READER RATING SURVEY

On the reverse of this page, we are providing a form for submitting reader train ratings, for your convenience. It is not necessary to use the form to submit your ratings. Rating instructions are given below.

Readers are invited to submit their ratings and comments on North American regularly scheduled passenger trains (not commuter) ridden between July 1 and December 31, 1976. Results will be published in RTN as soon as possible after the Dec 31 cutoff date. Note that our new rating form asks for comments to be placed on a separate sheet. This is because the small space we could provide on the form tended to inhibit the submitting of comments.

INSTRUCTIONS: Rate as many trains as you wish, but rate only those you have personally ridden during the period ending Dec 31. Rate each train on each of the 11 categories (A-K) listed below:

A. Overall quality of service, taking everything into account.
B. Service from on-board train personnel, except food service personnel.
C. Service from dining, snack or lounge crew.
D. Quality of food offered aboard the train.
E. Condition of cars used (cleanliness, repair, etc.).
F. Desirability of the particular toute it follows.
G. Quality of station services along the route.
H. Condition of the track and roadbed along the route.
I. Desirability of present scheduling of the train.
J. Train promotion--how well is it advertised or promoted?
K. Desirability of type of cars used on the train.

1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9

very poor — average, acceptable — very good

Use a 9-point scale (as shown above) for your ratings, with 1 = extremely poor, 9 = extremely good, and 5 (scale mid-point) = average, acceptable. You need not make a rating on each of the above 11 items, but list all 11 letters (A-K), unless you use the form which already lists them, for each train, and place your rating number beside each letter, leaving blank any categories you can't rate. Place your number rating, from 1-9, beside each category letter.

Please submit your ratings on a piece of paper or card separate from any other business or editorial correspondence (not necessarily in a separate envelope). Add whatever comments you wish after your ratings. Include your name and address and indicate whether we can use your name if we publish your comments. Unless you indicate otherwise, we will assume we can use your name.

People occasionally ask what should be their basis for judgments--the ideal train, the best train under present circumstances, etc. Our answer is: use your own judgment. That way the results will reflect rider satisfaction based on riders' own internal criteria. This gives the most useful information, since riders' personal satisfaction is what determines train patronage.

We are accepting ratings of Auto-Train and Canadian trains, along with Amtrak and non-Amtrak American passenger trains.

SEND YOUR RATINGS TO: Rail Travel News, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Thank you!

RTN'S TRAIN RATING FORM

NAME & ADDRESS:

.....

.....

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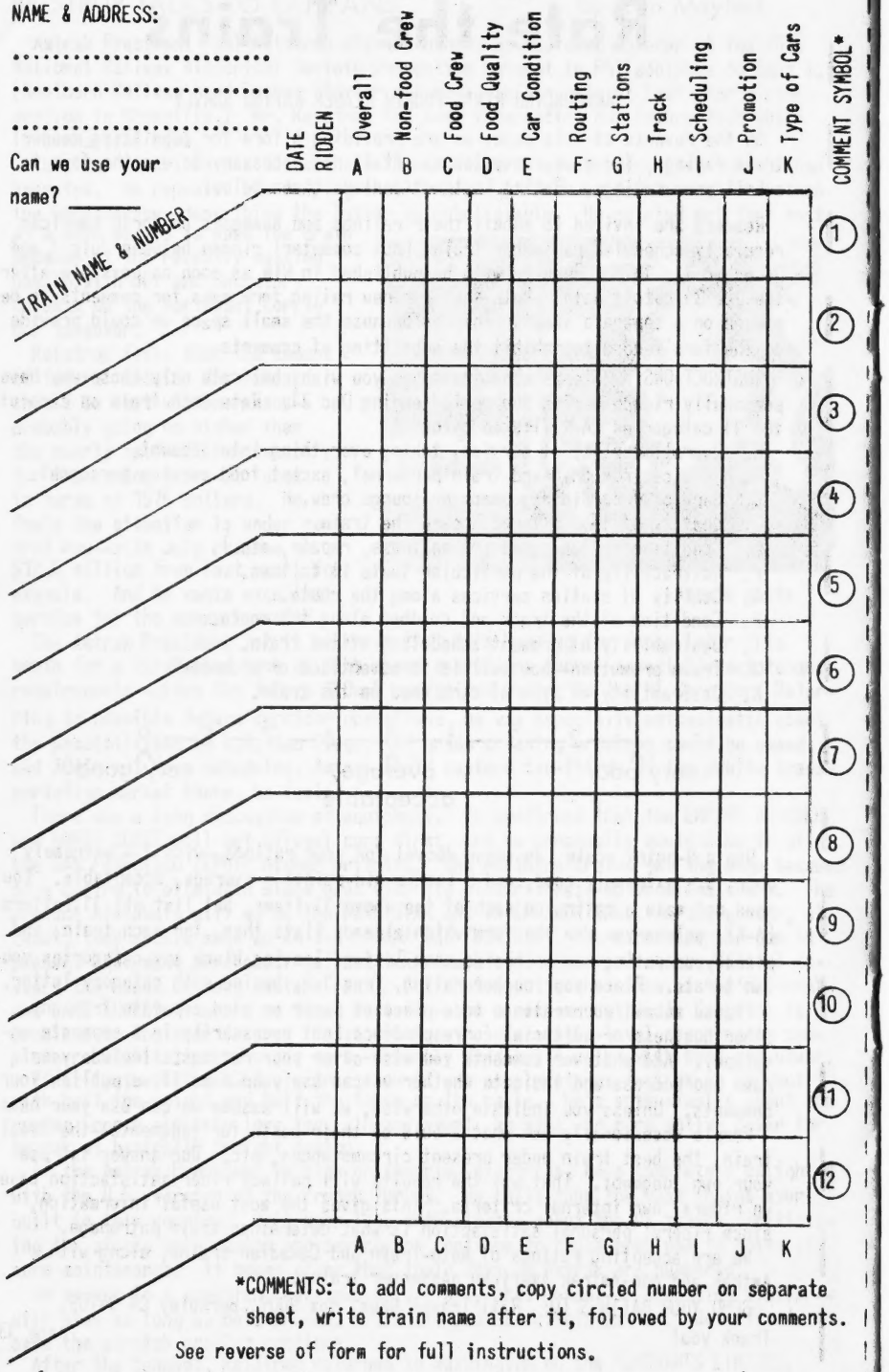
Can we use your name? _____



*COMMENTS: to add comments, copy circled number on separate sheet, write train name after it, followed by your comments.

See reverse of form for full instructions.

(14)

finally, four men get hold of his wheelchair and lift him up onto the vestibule trap. On the way up, he teeters a bit. "My heart stopped at that point" the Amtrak man told me later. But he got in alright, and was seated in the large open section in the front of the Amcafe press car.

We speed away at 6:25 with smooth traveling until we arrive at San Diego at 6:55, only 10 minutes late. The power goes off momentarily as we are getting off. Out on the platform, about 50 people are here to greet us. A little podium is set up, but before things get going, I notice a new addition to the trackside scene: would you believe a train washer?! Yes, just like at Albuquerque. This, however, is a newly-built vehicle with a bright orange brush, and it is going along the Amfleet windows now. Altho the brush is protected with a rubber lip and shield, the driver still has to wear a raincoat. Local TV stations get their shots.

Pretty soon the mike is turned on, and after the feedback is taken care of, various people are introduced. Senator Mills tells us about the unused capacity of the rail lines once more. Councilman Tom Gay concurs that this train is the greatest. Dave Watts says this is a happy day, since it took four years for this train to happen. Adriana Gianturco says the train symbolizes our commitment to multi-modal transportation plus it's a good use of taxpayers' money. She enjoyed the ride along the beach, and compared Amfleet's ride with the smoothness of airliners. The Mayor of Carlsbad is acknowledged, and all dignitaries are thanked. Finally, everyone is urged to ride the train.

The washer then starts up and does the last four cars. Now it's hang around in the gathering dusk for awhile, go inside and look at steam locomotive postcards and generally wait it out until the train is turned and backs down to the station again.

As we board, around 8pm, a pleasant surprise: those of the press making the return trip are treated to a hot meal, courtesy of Amtrak. Waiters serve us at our seats. A complete steak dinner. Thank you, Amtrak. We're munching away as the train glides out of the station at 8:20pm, on time. I relax later with a 7-Up. Bless me, this is pleasant, etc. Many were the compliments on the quality of the food this night.

Easy conversation was the mode of things the rest of the way home. Del Mar was departed at 8:53, Oceanside on the dot at 9:11. I talk with Joe Broussard, acting chief steward for tonight, and ask him how many dinners were ordered. Eighty, he says, with 75 already served. With the crew's meals, there will be no waste. Joe has 35 years seniority, and started with the Southern Pacific as a dishwasher in 1942. Amtrak is better to work with, he says. Why? He told me that with Amtrak, if a man is qualified to be promoted, he'll be promoted. It was not that way with SP. "I was as high as I could get--a steward--when Amtrak came in. Now I'm an instructor. I train cooks and waiters."

He also feels Amtrak did a very good job in the last five years with what they had to work with. Sometimes a good waiter or steward can make it very convenient for a waiting passenger so that he overlooks the delay for food. What about slow, rude and inefficient service employees? Well, Joe says, there have been problems, as some people are good at their work but can't meet the public. (They don't mean any harm, but it's their personality.) Also, a lot of the younger guys don't want to work. But Amtrak is getting a lot stricter than they used to be. I thank Mr. Broussard for his comments.

San Juan Capistrano is left at 9:43, after we pass a freight train and the southbound SAN DIEGAN. We depart Santa Ana at 10:03, where some dignitaries get off. At this point I get involved in a conversation between Art Lloyd, an active rail enthusiast, and a few other interested parties. We discuss train notes along with plans for the future. Art is saying that Amtrak has to provide what the public will buy. "I'd like to have a Lucius Beebe diner on every train, but most people want McDonalds. We're really trying to provide a good basic dining car service. A lot of airlines and snack bars are better than McDonald's, but it's all what I would call instant plastic food."

We learn also that when the SAN JOAQUIN is Amfleeted, it'll have the Amdinette cars as well as 60-seat legrest configurations. The Amfleet cars won't be available until after the Jimmy Carter campaign trains, however--sometime in late October. A second train for the L.A.-Oakland STARLIGHT route is being considered; but not a revival of the LARK night train, but an Amfleeted day train leaving a couple of hours

sooner than the STARLIGHT. By the way, we hear, every time Amtrak wants to add a stop to that train, the SP wants 5 more minutes on the schedule. That would add up to too much, and that's why Amtrak is not servicing such places as Albany, Oregon at the present. A suggestion is made to improve publicity photos of the STARLIGHT by using locations like Gaviota Trestle above Santa Barbara, with the train sweeping across. Art says that so far this year he's made 12 trips on the STARLIGHT, and can never get enough of the ocean.

Senator Mills has been pressing to get the train to run onthe east side of the valley--via Sacramento and Marysville; but the STARLIGHT's connections are right now locked in at both ends.

People talk about "old" passenger cars, Art remarks. Why, the last ones we have were built for UP in the 1960s; but airliners --there are 707's and DC-8's from 1958 that are still in service. The airliners really aren't always "new". He says the generation of people that isn't riding the trains now are the World War II people who got turned off of troop trains and have been blaming the railroads for them ever since. To really sell the trains, get John Denver to do commercials, not JohnnyCash.

We leave Fullerton at 10:23pm, as conversation continues. The lights over the windows are turned off now to permit easy nighttime viewing. It was quite a fight to get the CALTRAK train to leave at 4:10pm. Santa Fe wanted it to leave at 2:25pm. As it is, the turn time in San Diego is not long enough to suit Santa Fe, otherwise the northbound run would leave at 8pm instead of 8:20.

Dave Watts joins us, and mentions that the arbitration panel will probably meet in late November or early December to decide whether Los Angeles County can operate its "commuter" train. If the binding arbitration decision goes against Amtrak, the county would be stuck with the equipment.

I ask about problems with Amcafe cars, such as slow service. "We've done some goofing" Amtrak admits; "there should be two guys on each trip." This is mainly in the Northeast Corridor, but also on the heavy days to San Diego.

Amtrak is unaware of any complaints about lack of window shades on the Amfleet cars. There are complaints about the smoking policy, Amtrak contemplating having another car designated as a smoker. There are many complaints about the lack of sit-down lounge space. The Amdinettes, where in service, are proving immensely popular. It was hinted that perhaps the remaining Amcafe cars on order could be changed to Amdinnettes.

Art Lloyd was queried about Amtrak lounge car 3351--the ex-Santa Fe bar lounge that was refurbished with nothing but those dinky little oval tables with the holes. He allowed that it was one of many experimental designs and hasn't gone over very well. It should be redone at its next overhaul. None too soon, in my book.

The point of the car washer at San Diego was brought up in a favorable light. Dave Watts said "We have 14 or 16 of those car washers on order. The plan was to have them all built and employed before this summer season, so all long distance trains would be washed at least once on their journey. But we ran into design problems and the manufacturer had all kinds of delays. The first two units were received at the end of the summer--one here, the other in Portland. We aren't sure if we really want to lock in on this design for the rest of the order. We have put them on hold. But we will get them by next summer. We want those trains to have clean windows. That's what long distance trains are all about." They would be located at Oakland, for one place, for the STARLIGHT; Sparks, for another, as the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR comes off the Salt Lake fill caked with salt sometimes. And other places, too.

"First class sleeping car patronage is up 25% from last year" Watts said; "That's amazing strength. But we are absolutely constrained by the lack of sleeping cars." As far as Lexan is concerned, "between replacing glass windows and safety on one hand, and viewing ability on the other, where do we go? Actually, we are working on a new concept to eliminate scratches."

Our train now pulled into the Los Angeles terminal at 10:58pm. A nice trip was had by all, and a good beginning to a hopefully well-used service. But one never knows, does one? After all, during the entire day I had worn the old Amtrak button "Easy Come, Easy Go" as a memorial to the LAS VEGAS LIMITED.

Urban-Suburban Transit

THE LOS ANGELES transit strike that began in late August showed a glimmer of hope on Sept 21, as drivers voted to accept a contract, but talks with mechanics had not yet produced a settlement.

RECORD LABOR DAY crowds rode the BART system--over 142,000 riders--lured by a bargain single systemwide fare of 25¢. BART believed that over half of the passengers were trying the system for the first time.

CHICAGO'S REGIONAL TRANSIT Authority offered the Rock Island a $7.5 million subsidy Sept 7, with the provision that $1 million of it would have to be spent for improvements in comfort and efficiency for commuters. RTA also recently proposed a 5¢ fare increase for the Chicago Transit Authority--and the CTA this month warned that this amount would not cover the deficit in the 1977 budget.

BOSTON'S MBTA IS engaged in a plan to purchase the bankrupt Boston & Main Railroad and rehabilitate it, and was awaiting a committee approval of the purchase--to be financed heavily by federal funds--late this month. A 5¢ subway fare increase on MBTA has been delayed until next spring.

A FIFTH TRAIN on the L.A.-San Diego route would be financed by a $3.15 million funding bill given state senate approval late in August. It includes $1.65 million for track improvements on the Santa Fe line.

THE DOT ANNOUNCED Sept 2 the publication of the 1976 edition of the "Summary of National Transportation Statistics", obtainable from Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Gov't Printing Office, Washington DC 20402. Stock number is 050-000-00118-1, and the price is $1.85 per copy.

ELECTRIC AUTO DEVELOPMENT will proceed under a $160 million, 6-year program that Congress okayed Sept 17 when it overrode Pres. Ford's veto of the legislation.

EIGHT DOUBLE-DECKER BUSES bought from British Leyland Corp. arrived in mid-August in New York to re-introduce double-decker service to Gotham's transit riders.

AN OPEN-AIR STREETCAR on loan from Blackpool, England, has been placed in operation on the Philadelphia SEPTA transit system's "Independence Loop" in downtown.

UMTA'S RECENTLY PUBLISHED report on Light Rail Transit is available at $4.30 per copy from Office of Public Affairs, Rm 9300, 400-7th St S.W., Washington 20590.

MONTREAL METRO OFFICIALS reported exceptionally large loads carried with relative ease during the Olympic Games in July--some loads virtually doubled in size.

HISTORIC HOYT HOTEL in Portland OR, one block from Union Station, will be bought by Greyhound and Pacific Trailways and demolished to make way for a transportation center... AMTRAK OPERATED SIX special trains to the 41st International Eucharistic Congress in South Philadelphia Aug 8. The "Green," "Blue," and "Yellow" trains from NY were all Amfleet, while the "Brown" train from Harrisburg, the "Black" from Trenton, and the "Purple" from Downington consisted of Silverliners... MAYOR OF CARMEL, California, whom we quoted recently as opposed to the DEL MONTE EXPRESS revival, resigned this month in a dispute over the role of tourism in the seaside town... HERE'S MORE NEWS about Civic Plaza National Bank trains (see p.20): A second special run for Saudia Arabia was made Sept 19, using the old NEBRASKA ZEPHYR equipment that the Arab nation is apparently also interested in. Train left Kansas City 11:30am and ran roundtrip on ATSF to Emporia. Consist was ATSF engine 5561, and cars Apollo, Neptune, Mars, Vulcan and Jupiter. They will move soon to New Orleans to be shipped overseas from there, prasumably along with the DENVER ZEPHYR consist. Meanwhile the bank has purchased some of the other remaining set of DZ cars from a N. Dakota scrap dealer: cars (all names preceded by "Silver") Herald, Sides, State, Service, Tip, Lining, and Beam. They are stored in the Kansas City Terminal roundhouse and coach yard, awaiting renovation... WITH THE FALL time changes Oct 31, look for the FLORIDIAN to lv Chicago 8:30am, and the INTER-AMERICAN 8:35am, both missing a connection with train 320 from Milwaukee, which reaches Chicago at 8:32am. With a 6:55 Milwaukee departure, 320 has the longest running time of any Milwaukee-Chicago train...

Rail Canada

CANADIAN CITIZENS GROUP assails Palais Station closing: Transport 2000, a nationally-based citizens' organization (PO Box 300, Terminal A, Ottawa, Ont. K1N 8V3), said this month that the closing after Aug 31 of Quebec City's historic station was a "major setback" in efforts to revitalize Quebec-Windsor service. The group said that CN and CP Rail trains to the city now have separate depots, each several miles from the city center. "What will be the point of traveling at 120mph only to be faced at the destination with a $5.00 taxi ride thru congested city streets?" the group's general counsel asked rhetorically. The Quebec-Montreal route has been designated by Transport Canada as recipient of a $30 million upgrading. Palais Station opened in 1916. There have been rumours that the Railway Transport Committee directing the upgrading project is having a change of heart, and might order CN and CP to return to Palais Station, tho this would encounter political opposition from those backing use of the station for a farmers-market retail center and from city fathers who want the rail right-of-way leading to the station for new highway construction.

OTTAWA'S TRANSPORT RUMOUR mill, fairly quiet since conclusion of hearings on the future of transcon train service, has bubbled slightly in recent weeks. Insiders say that a degree of tension now exists between the Ministry of Transport and the Canadian Transport Commission, which conducted the hearings. The MOT has been expecting CTC to opt for a heavy reduction in transcon passenger train miles. The CTC thus far has been reluctant to follow this course, and if there are cutbacks, they may be restricted to tri-weekly operation for both CN and CP Rail in off-season periods, altho this is by no means a certain matter at this time.

CP RAIL SPOKESMAN has denied an earlier report by CN officials that CP Rail was planning to repaint CP passenger equipment in the new blue-&-gold "VIA CN" colours now appearing on CN equipment. The CP spokesman said the new CN colours were "hellish". CP executive Stephen Morris said that altho CP approves of the idea of integrating CN and CP passenger runs, the repainting is "bottom priority."

B.C. RAILWAY'S "Royal Hudson" steam runs from North Vancouver to Squamish B.C. were cancelled Aug 25 after a mud and rock slide, caused by rains, which derailed one unit of a 4-locomotive freight train near Lions Bay. Passengers on the railway's RDC runs were carried by bus to and from Prince George.

CN'S SUPER CONTINENTAL was detoured over CP after a freight derailment Aug 27 about 70 miles east of Vancouver. The derailment of 25 cars happened about 6:40am, about an hour after the westbound SUPER had passed the spot.

NATIONAL RAIL PASSENGER Conference will be held at Hotel Saskatchewan in Regina Oct 29 and 30 9:30am-5pm. Among speakers are Garth Campbell, CN's VP-Passenger Marketing, and Alfred Michaud, Amtrak's VP-Marketing. Fee is $25 sent to University of Regina, NRPC, Dept. of Extension, Room 104 College Bldg., College and Scarth, Regina, Sask. S4S 0A2. Conference is followed at 10am Oct 31 by First Annual General Meeting of Transport 2000 Canada.

SILVER DONALD CAMERON wrote in Weekend Magazine Aug 28 an article "The Trouble with Trains" which began as follows: "Take a train ride now. You may not have another chance. Otto Lang says he's going to revitalize the passenger services. That's Ottawa doublespeak: what he really proposes is to shut most of them down."

FEDERAL TRANSPORT MINISTER Otto Lang, who seeks to cut back passenger trains, is now seeking to revive the abandoned Pickering-Toronto super airport project, which may cost in excess of $1 billion at today's price level.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Coleman insists that Amtrak will waste vast sums of money if (N.E. Corridor) reconstruction is handled thru the rail unions. Reistrup says FRA does not have the practical railway experience needed, and if he was forced to admit FRA contractors onto Amtrak property he would 'sell tickets to watch, because it would be quite a show.'" --Railway Gazette International, September

Mixed Train of Thoughts

VERMONT STEAM TRAIN inaugural run with E. M. Frimbo is described in the New Yorker (Sept 6 issue)..... ON PAUL REISTRUP'S trip to Japan the week of Sept 12 he took along his Chief Engineer Bob Lawson and they looked closely at track maintenance on the Shinkansen (Bullet Train) line. This necessitated observing work between midnight and 5am, which is when JNR does its maintenance..... THE NATIONAL LIMITED is being detoured westbound only Mon-Fri between Terre Haute and St. Louis on the old NYC line because of track repairs on the ConRail route. This adds one hour to the running time, and causes the train to bypass Effingham..... JUNE RIDERSHIP FIGURES still have not reached us--just being released as we go to press, along with July figures that Amtrak for the first time tallied up itself. June ridership on Amtrak was up 10% overall, July up 8%, from 1975. First class ridership showed the biggest percentage gains, up 21% in June, 26% in July, while coach was up 15% and 14% respectively..... UNITED AIRCRAFT TURBOTRAINS have been pulled out of Amtrak service effective Sept 9. That report on p.14 last issue was garbled: it gave the right schedules but should have stated that the Turbos were being replaced by Amfleet equipment on trains 150/153 and by RDCs on 151/152. Amtrak could report no definite plans for the Turbos..... NEW TIME CARDS for Sept 9 were issued showing the changes just mentioned (form 4A), and for the revised SAN DIEGAN service effective Sept 1 (form 13A)..... A NEW COMMISSARY in Los Angeles will be fully open by Oct 1, replacing the former one at L.A. Union Station. The new, at 2450 Enterprise, will make it easier to stock diners, since it will be closer to where Amtrak services its cars..... A RELIABLE SOURCE informs us that Amtrak's SOUTHERN CRESCENT, trains 171-172, will go Amfleet on Oct 31, which means an end to thru Southern cars on Amtrak and a cutback of the NY-LA sleeper to DC-LA. The train will be renamed, as will trains 168 and 183. Other changes: Trains 66 & 67 will be Amfleeted; trains 702/701 will be renumbered 34/35; trains 703-704-705 will be dropped; trains 63-64 will be Amfleeted. All Corridor Amfleet trains now have Amlounge service. Cars 20200 thru 20210 have 8 lounge tables and 30 coach seats. Cars 20750 thru 20775 have 8 lounge tables and 22 coach seats with leg rests..... A CONRAIL SPOKESMAN tells us that the railroad has appropriated the money for electrification of the Harrisburg-Pittsburgh main (Horseshoe Curve) line, and work could begin next spring and take 18mos to complete. Amtrak will have to pay ConRail to electrify the track from Harrisburg station to the main line and from the main line to Pittsburgh station--about 3 miles total. What's next? Plans call for the electrification of the Pittsburgh-Cleveland line via Alliance, with the Chicago-Albany water level route after that..... AMTRAK STARTS HAULING freight on Oct 1: on that date ConRail will no longer be responsible for local Corridor freight service. Amtrak has reportedly obtained 30 freight locos and cabin cars to do the job..... THE WINTER SCHEDULES will take place about Dec 10, and at that time the CHAMPION/METEOR will again split into separate trains for the heavy winter season. It is rumored that the PALMETTO will be cut back to NY-Richmond then, resuming its run to Savannah next April..... THE CHAMPION-METEOR detoured over C&O-Southern from Richmond to Alexandria VA Sept 18 because of a freight derailment on RF&P, putting it 2 hours late into Washington. ICG freight derailment at La Clede IL Sept 11 caused train 391 to terminate at Effingham and passengers to be bused to Carbondale, and the reverse for train 392. The PANAMA LIMITED detoured both ways via Edgewood Cutoff--Edgewood to Bluford to Akin Jct to Groat to Du Quoin..... THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of RR Psgrs on Sept 20 called for restoration of direct rail passenger service between Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Washington DC.....

AMTRAK CONVENTION SPECIAL for the NRHS convention on Sept 5 (see page 12) had the following interesting consist: Amfleet cars, with E60 loco and ConRail Bicentennial GG-1 engine 4800. At the convention, Amtrak's Paul Reistrup said that daily operation of the INTER-AMERICAN between Chicago and Ft. Worth seems certain to begin at the end of October..... AUTO-TRAIN CORPORATION expects a big shot in the arm from the coming combined Auto-Train/Amtrak service between Louisville and Florida. The company had a net loss of $421,389 in the quarter ended July 31, reports the Wall Street Journal, and it was blamed on suspension of the Midwest service and damages from its recent derailment. The company predicted a return to profitability later this year..... A FOOTBALL SPECIAL, the first of 3 this year to the University of Wisconsin, will be run by Amtrak Milwaukee-Madison on Sept 25, leaving Milwaukee 9:45am, with probable consist one P30 engine and 4 ex-CNW bilevel cars. These bilevels are now running on the BLACK HAWK. Similar bilevels have run for some time on the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, but that train was Amfleeted in early May for a time, then returned to bilevels..... SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR consists have been moved to the ATSF coach yard in Chicago as of Sept 15, and ILLINOIS ZEPHYR consists to the PC coach yard. The ATSF yard handles all Amfleet cars running out of Chicago..... SAUDIAN ARABIAN GOVERNMENT has for some time been negotiating to purchase the old DENVER ZEPHYR train owned by Civic Plaza National Bank and stored in Kansas City. On Sept 18 a special trial run of the train for Saudi Arabia was made Kansas City-Emporia and return. It was hauled by ATSF engine 5631 and ran at maximum passengor train speed of 79mph. The cars of the train are named as follows, with each name preceded by "Silver": Courier, Bar, Bell, City, Lake, Grill, Tone, Threads, Slipper, and Flash. The train has been sporting a Saudi Arabian drumhead for several months..... THE DEDICATION OF the State of California's Railroad museum in Sacramento's Old Town, close to the Amtrak station (see RTN, 2nd July, p.7), takes place Sept 25-26, and Amtrak will display an Amfleet coach and a new diesel locomotive there, which will be open for inspection. Bicentennial locomotives of WP, SP, and ATSF will also be on hand. As the emerging of the Sacramento-Bay Area Corridor moves onward, this introduction of Amfleet equipment to the public in the State capital appears timely..... SAN DIEGAN RIDERSHIP figures for Sept 1-16 have been released, and they show increases of 9.1 to 65.2% compared to 1975 on the three original L.A.-San Diego runs. The new CALTRAK SAN DIEGAN carried a total of 3796 riders in that 16-day period. With the new train included, Amtrak carried 68.1% more riders than in the same 1975 period--a total of 24,752.....

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Express Ads

CHARTER THE AMTRAK-APPROVED PRIVATE CAR "MINNEAPOLIS CLUB." This beautiful round end observation-lounge (with full wet bar) seats 32 passengers. Excellent for Reno weekend parties. Reserve your choice date now from GREAT WESTERN TOURS, Sheraton-Palace Hotel, Suite 900, San Francisco 94105. (415) 398-2994.

Dining car china dishes and glasses, several railroads. Stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kansas 67213.

October 9, 10, 1976: A Branch Line Ramble over scenic freight only lines of the Canadian National Railways will be operated out of London, Ontario each day using Budd RDCs. Saturday trip will operate to Stratford, Listowel and Kincardine, and return. Sunday trip (one way with Budd cars, return via regular train at extra fare from Burlington) to Toronto via St. Thomas (via old London and Port Stanley interurban route), to Tillsonburg Junction, Lynden, Guelph, Georgetown, Burlington and Toronto. Saturday trip $22.00, Sunday trip $18.00, both days $38.00. For further information, including return fares from Burlington & hotel reservations in London, write: Branch Line Ramble, Windsor-Essex Division, Canadian Railway Historical Association, 300 Cabana Road East, Windsor, Ontario N9G 1A3.

CASS SCENIC WEEKEND! Riley south Oct 15 from DC, north Oct 17. $55.00 includes transportation and lodging. Meals available. Hoosierail Tours, 202-483-0369.

CHESAPEAKE & OHIO STEAM/DIESEL Calendar for 1977. Thirteen full 8½x11" photos and appointment style calendar. Unfolds to 11x17; heavy gloss paper; wide variety of freight and passenger action. $3.00--or $3.50 via First Class Mail. C&O Historical Society, P.O. Box 417, Alderson, W.Va. 24910.

West Coast Rail Sale, now through Dec 18th. Only $109.00 round trip coach between San Diego/Los Angeles/Santa Barbara and Portland/Seattle/Vancouver. Still time to ride the Royal Hudson too! Reserve now through the rail specialists, Let's Travel, 3780 Elizabeth St, Riverside CA 92506; 714-787-8350.

GUATEMALA RAILFAN FUN-TRAIN--Jan 21-Feb 6, 1977--Narrow gauge steam special train thru GUATEMALA mountains--visit round house and yards. Private cars SOONERLAND and MISTLETOE. Starts in Oklahoma (join anywhere). Write Midwest Travel Service, 2936-R Bella Vista, Midwest City, Oklahoma, 73110--Phone 732-0566.

SANTA FE MAN since 48. Rode the hi-wheelers 5 years bucking telegraphers extra board. Tough life but I'd sure like to try it again for just a week. Have ladies' turquoise and sterling silver jewelry. Quality stones and workmanship. Hogan hand made, no two alike. Although it's about half price, I guarantee it to be genuine and to please or return within 10 days for prompt refund. Rings with dime to nickel size stone $8.50, fancy $12.50.. Bracelet with dime size stone $12.50.. Bracelet with 3 dime to quarter size stones, fancy $29.50.. Pendant with nickel size stone and factory chain $8.50, fancy $12.50.. Squash blossom necklace with 17 dime to nickel size stones $117.50, with 18 nickel to quarter size stones, fancy $147.50. Add $1 postage & ins. Shipped in 14 days or your cashiers check or M.O. returned. J. Brummitt, La Plata, MO 63549. P.S.: three or more pieces subtract 10%.

YOU MUST ATTEND THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TIMETABLE COLLECTORS SIXTH RAILROADIANA BOURSE. Sunday November 7, 1976 at the Italian-American Hall, Inman Rd. & New Brunswick Ave., Rahway N.J. 9:30a.m. - 5:00p.m. For sale: Railroad, Steamship, airline, trolley timetables, books, slides, hardware, photos & all other types of railroadiana. Information - Elton Van Nostrand, 3 Olive Street, Danbury, Conn. 06810.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads $25 per half-page (maximum size--4x5 inches); $12.50 quarter page. Write: Message Media, Ad Dept., Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Thank you!

CARS & CONSISTS

*Southern X4449 (Birmingham-Atlanta segment), Birmingham, Aug 26: engine 4449 & tender, SR water tank #50; SR 726, 1035, 1037, 1069 "Missionary Ridge", 4061 "Queen & Crescent Club" commisary car, 1067, 1068, 1086, 3659, 1081, 1056 "Lookout Mountain." (All cars Southern Rwy.)

*SR SKYLAND SPECIAL, Old Fort, NC, Aug 29: F units 6133, 6141; 960105, 960104 (gondola type inspection cars with canopies), 1043, 1041, 1042, parlor dome 1602.

*NATIONAL LIMITED, train 31 at Kansas City Sep 11: engines 598 (SDP40F), 452 (E9B); cars 1186 (NY-LA), 2623 "Pacific Park" (NY-LA), 2692, 8081 "Birmingham", 5410, 5428, 5653,(deadheading to Mira Loma shops in Calif.:) 2654 "Silver Falls", 2614 "Pacific Heights", 2635 "Pacific Spray", 2631 "Pacific Scene." Train 431, Washington section of train 31, at Columbia PA Sep 6: engines 714 (P30), 437 (E8A); car 5418. (Train normally uses one GG-1 for power.) Train 30, Pittsburgh PA, Aug 21: engines 592 (SDP40F), 457 (E9B); cars 1026, 2786 "Putnam County" (LA-NY), 2706 "Athens", 8012, 5605, 5421, 5621, 5431, 5678 (Pittsburgh-DC), 5674 (Pitts-DC), (deadhead:) 2032 "Loch Rannoch" (from train 21), 5684 (from train 41).

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, San Jose Sep 6 (Labor Day): engines 572, 558; cars 1158, 1502, 5230, 5226, 5231, 4850, 8103, 4852, 4461, 4509, 4531, 4870, 4495, dome 9373, 8030, 2711 "Pine Beach", 2710 "Pine Arroyo", 2365 "Regal Hill." Same, Sep 15: engines 555, 562; 1004 "Silver Coyote", 1500 "San Miguel", 4535, 4871, 8107, 4860, 4872, 4861, 4531, 3330, 8038, 2713 "Pine Cavern", 2710 "Pine Arroyo", 2369 "Regal Stream". (Train 1¢ hrs late.)

*FLORIDIAN, train 57, Chic-Louisville Sep 1: (engines & bag?); cars 1517, 2773 "Norfolk", 8089, 5470, dome 9452, dome 9468, 3802, 2775 "Tampa". Train 56, Louisville-Chic Sep 2: engines 635, 639; cars 2802 "Halifax County" (deadhead), 3254 "City of Chicago" (deadhead), 1065, 1187, 1519, 2685, 8086, 5469, 5624, dome 9453, 3630, 2304 "Rice Bird."

*The whereabouts of cars 3870 & 3871 were requested last issue. Dave Tyler saw them both on the weekend layover of the MICHIGAN EXECUTIVE Aug 28: cars 3870, 6423, 6020, 3871, at Jackson MI. 1st time he's seen two obs. cars on a "commuter" train.

*LAKE SHORE LIMITED, train 48, Elyria OH Aug 17: engines 712 (P30), 601 (SDP40F); cars 3206 "Rapid Stream", 2231 "Hialeah", 2239 "Elberton", 2831 "Lebanon Valley", 2016 "Thrush", 5644, 6047, 8336, 3336, 5663, 5657, 6435. Same, Aug 21: engines 701 (P30), 594 (SDP40F); cars 1531, 2029 "Loch Katrine", 2300 "Blue Bird", 2303 "Jay Bird", 2236 "Magnolia Gardens", 6060, 6069, 8334, 3210 "Keystone State", 5649, 5661, 5686, 5668. Same, Aug 28: engines 702 (P30), 601 (SDP40F); cars 1521, 2530 "Bobolink", 2703 "Sarasota", 2531 "Cardinal", 5662, 5475, 8330, 3360 "Chessie Club", 5659, 5650, 5615, 6445. Same, Aug 29: engines 703 (P30), 594 (SDP40F); cars 1532, 2014 "Robin", 2831 "Lebanon Valley", 2401 "Bad Axe River", 5677, 5699, 8336, 3336, 5663, 5673, 5405.

*JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY/MOUNTAINEER, train 50/54, Chicago Aug 4: (engines?); cars 1044, 6000, 8054, 1162, 2234 "Tallahassee", 5651, 5626, 5403, 8202, 4403, dome 9540 "Silver Island", 2150 "Silver Flower."

*SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, train 6, Chicago Aug 21: (engines?); cars 1184, 5014 "Silver Bit", 1090, 1416, 4476, 5010 "Silver Shaft", 5016 "Silver Halter", 4825, 5617, 5608, dome 9463, 3335, 8065, 2620 "Pacific Mist", 2649 "Silver Rapids", 2256 "Star View", 2031 "Loch Tay", 3260 "Wingate Brook" observation.

*MONTREALER, train 60, Washington Aug 31: engine 957 (E60); cars 1089, 2836 "Missouri River", 8337, 3301, 5436, 5241, 6063, 5699.

*EMPIRE BUILDER, train 8, Spokane Aug 17: engines 563 (SDP), 534 (SDP in new color scheme); cars 1055, 1540, dome 9500, 4527, dome 9482, 4550, dome 9365, 8093, dome slpr 9214, 2656 "Silver Crag", 2266 "Placid Sea." Train 7, Aug 18: engines 565, 578; cars 1064, 1553, dome 9469, 4890, dome 9472, 4817, dome 9364, 8066, dome 9220, 2658 "Silver Dale", 2264 "Placid Meadow", 2624 "Pacific Patrol", BN office car "Columbia River" off at Spokane.